

How to Identify Candidates Who Possess the Proper Mindset

by Stacy Pursell, The VET Recruiter

www.thevetrecruiter.com

Hiring the right candidates is tough enough in this current job market. This is especially the case within the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession. That's because job openings are **plentiful** and qualified candidates to fill those openings are **not**.

But even if you're able to find a candidate with the right background and skills and the requisite amount of experience, you can still make what amounts to a bad hire. How is that possible? Because you filled the position based on one, two, or even three levels of screening, but you didn't fill it based on all levels.

What does that mean, exactly?

A 6-pack of hiring goodness

It means that skills and experience are all well and good. However, if you want to hire candidates who are **true superstars**, then they must have the proper mindset, as well. Skills and experience will only take you so far, no matter how many of them or how much of it you have. The **proper mindset** will take you the rest of the way.

Below are **six traits** that typify the mindset of the candidates that your organization should be striving to hire on a consistent basis:

#1—Proactive as opposed to reactive

When you're proactive, you make things happen. Most of the time, you also move from a position of strength. When you're reactive, you're not making things happen. You react to things that happen TO you, and when you do that, you're usually moving from a position of weakness. When you move from a position of strength, you have more leverage. Having more leverage increases your chances for success, sometimes dramatically.

#2—Does not cling to the status quo

The status quo is not your friend. In fact, the status quo is not anyone's friend, least of all the friend of your employees. For your best employees, "good" should never be the same as "good enough." In fact, nothing should ever be "good enough." Your employees should always be striving to accomplish more, both for themselves and for the organization. The best type of candidates want to continuously evolve.

#3—Not afraid to fail

Those who are afraid to fail are also those who are more likely to cling to the status quo, so you can see how these traits and attributes go hand-in-hand. Those people who show a history of being willing to take risks are generally more successful than those who don't. We're not talking about unnecessary risks or

taking risks just for the sake of taking them. We're talking about taking calculated risks in the interest of accomplishing something bigger and better . . . and not being afraid of failing in the process.

#4—Takes responsibility as opposed to blaming others

Things are going to go wrong. It happens. What's important is how people respond to things going wrong. When it comes to this scenario, there are basically two types of people: those who blame others for what happens and those who accept responsibility. (There's also a third category: those who accept responsibility although the fault may not necessarily lie with them. Those in this category are often *leadership material*.)

#5—A “whatever it takes” attitude

A truly great employee never complains about something “not being their job.” They understand that they are not just an employee, but they are also part of a team. And since they're part of a team, they must be a good team member and do what is necessary for the team to be successful. They do NOT have a sense of entitlement, nor do they believe that anything is beneath them. They just want to get the job done, period.

#6—Resilient/mentally tough

Adversity is, in a word, inevitable. That's as true in the world of business and the employment marketplace as it is everywhere else. Organizations that are stocked with resilient people are more successful than organizations that are not. It doesn't matter how talented an individual is. If they're not mentally tough or if they run at the first sign of trouble, then there is a limit to the amount of value they can provide to the organization.

An intelligent hiring strategy

How does knowing about the traits that form the proper mindset help you from a hiring standpoint? Aren't qualified candidates difficult enough to find? Won't screening them for the proper mindset make them even more scarce? Although it might be tempting to believe that, it's not necessarily the case.

This is about making a good hire just as much as it is about NOT making a bad one. As we've determined, quality candidates are scarce. However, let's say that you find a great candidate who has all of the elements of the proper mindset, but they're lacking some of the skills and experience you'd like them to have. Should you not consider them?

The answer is no, especially if there is no other clear-cut favorite for the position. You should consider the candidate because while they can easily acquire skills and gain experience, it's more difficult to acquire the elements associated with the proper mindset. As a result, it would make sense to take a chance on a candidate who possesses these elements and then give them whatever they need to succeed and excel within the position.

That represents an **intelligent hiring strategy**. Hiring under present conditions in this current market is NOT easy. It requires creativity, insight, and the ability to spot attributes and characteristics often not found on a resume or job application.

However, the organizations that are able to hire in this fashion are the ones that will reap the rewards.